

(In him that was of late an Heretike)
As firme as faith.

Page. 'Tis well, 'tis well, no more:
Be not as extreme in submission, as in offence,
But let our plot go forward: Let our wiues
Yet once againe (to make vs publike sport)
Appoint a meeting with this old fat-fellow,
Where we may take him, and disgrace him for it.

Ford. There is no better way then that they spoke of.
Page. How? to send him word they'll meete him in
the Parke at midnight? Fie, fie, he'll neuer come.

En. You say he has bin throwne in the Riuer: and
has bin greuously peaten, as an old o'man: me-thinks
there should be terrors in him, that he should not come:
Me-thinks his flesh is punish'd, hee shall haue no de-
fires.

Page. So thinke I too.

M. Ford. Deuise but how you'll vse him when he comes,
And let vs two deuise to bring him thither.

Mist. Page. There is an old tale goes, that *Herne* the
Hunter (sometime a keeper heere in Windsor Forrest)
Doth all the winter time, at still midnight
Walke round about an Oake, with great rag'd-hornes,
And there he blasts the tree, and takes the cattle,
And make milch-kine yeeld blood, and shakes a chaine
In a most hideous and dreadfull manner.
You haue heard of such a Spirit, and well you know
The superstitious idle-headed-Eld
Receiu'd, and did deliuer to our age
This tale of *Herne* the Hunter, for a truth.

Page. Why yet there want not many that do feare
In deepe of night to walke by this *Hernes* Oake:
But what of this?

Mist. Ford. Marry this is our deuise,
That *Falstaffe* at that Oake shall meete with vs.

Page. Well, let it not be doubted but he'll come,
And in this shape, when you haue brought him thither,
What shall be done with him? What is your plot?

Mist. Pa. That likewise haue we thought vpon: & thus:

Nan Page (my daughter) and my little sonne,
And three or foure more of their growth, we'll dresse
Like *Vrchins*, *Ouphes*, and *Fairies*, greene and white,
With roundes of waxen Tapers on their heads,
And rattles in their hands; vpon a fodaine,
As *Falstaffe*, she, and I, are newly met,
Let them from forth a saw-pit rush at once
With some diffused song: Vpon their sight
We two, in great amazednesse will flye:
Then let them all encircle him about,
And Fairy-like to pinch the vncleane Knight;
And aske him why that houre of Fairy Reuell,
In their so sacred pathes, he dares to tread
In shape prophane.

Ford. And till he tell the truth,
Let the supposed *Fairies* pinch him, sound,
And burne him with their Tapers.

Mist. Page. The truth being knowne,
We'll all present our selues; dis-horne the spirit,
And mocke him home to Windsor.

Ford. The children must
Be practis'd well to this, or they'll neu'r doo't.

Ena. I will teach the children their behaviours: and I
will be like a Jacke-an-Apes also, to burne the Knight
with my Taber.

Ford. That will be excellent,
He go buy them vizards.

Mist. Page. My *Nan* shall be the Queene of all the
Fairies, finely attired in a robe of white.

Page. That filke will I go buy, and in that time
Shall M. *Slender* steale my *Nan* away,
And marry her at *Eaton*: go, send to *Falstaffe* straight.

Ford. Nay, Ile to him againe in name of *Broome*,
Hee'll tell me all his purpose: sure hee'll come.

Mist. Page. Feare not you that: Go get vs properties
And tricking for our *Fayries*.

Enans. Let vs about it,
It is admirable pleasures, and ferry honest knaueries.

Mist. Page. Go Mist. Ford,
Send quickly to Sir *John*, to know his minde:
Ile to the Doctor, he hath my good will,
And none but he to marry with *Nan Page*:
That *Slender* (though well landed) is an Ideot:
And he, my husband best of all affects:
The Doctor is well monied, and his friends
Potent at Court: he, none but he shall haue her,
Though twenty thousand worthier come to craue her.

Scena Quinta.

Enter *Hofst*, *Simple*, *Falstaffe*, *Bardolfe*, *Enans*,
Caino, *Quickly*.

Hofst. What wouldst thou haue? (*Boore*) what? (*thick*
skin) speake, breathe, discusse: breese, short, quicke,
snap.

Simple. Marry Sir, I come to speake with Sir *John Fal-*
staffe from M. *Slender*.

Hofst. There's his Chamber, his House, his Castle,
his standing-bed and truckle-bed: 'tis painted about
with the story of the Prodigall, fresh and new: go, knock
and call: hee'll speake like an *Anthrophaginian* vnto
thee: Knocke I say.

Simple. There's an olde woman, a fat woman gone vp
into his chamber: Ile be so bold as stay Sir till she come
downe: I come to speake with her indeed.

Hofst. Ha? A fat woman? The Knight may be robb'd:
Ile call. Bully-Knight, Bully Sir *John*: speake from thy
Lungs Military: Art thou there? It is thine *Hofst*, thine
Ephesian calls.

Fal. How now, mine *Hofst*?

Hofst. Here's a Bohemian-Tartar carries the comming
downe of thy fat-woman: Let her descend (*Bully*) let
her descend: my Chambers are honourable: Fie, priuacy?
Fie.

Fal. There was (mine *Hofst*) an old-fat-woman euen
now with me, but she's gone.

Simple. Pray you Sir, was't not the Wife-woman of
Brainford?

Fal. I marry was it (*Mussel-shell*) what would you
with her?

Simple. My Master (*Sir*) my master *Slender*, sent to her
seeing her go thorough the streets, to know (*Sir*) whe-
ther one *Nim* (*Sir*) that beguil'd him of a chaine, had the
chaine, or no.

Fal. I spake with the old woman about it.

Simple. And what sayes she, I pray Sir?

Fal. Marry shee sayes, that the very same man, that
beguil'd Master *Slender* of his Chaine, cozond him of it.

Simple. I would I could haue spoken with the Woman
her

her selfe, I had other things to haue spoken with her
too, from him.

Fal. What are they? let vs know.

Hofst. I: come: quicke.

Fal. I may not conceale them (*Sir*).

Hofst. Conceale them, or thou di'st.

Simple. Why sir, they were nothing but about *Mistris*
Anne Page, to know if it were my Masters fortune to
haue her, or no.

Fal. 'Tis, 'tis his fortune.

Simple. What Sir?

Fal. To haue her, or no: goe; say the woman told
me so.

Simple. May I be bold to say so Sir?

Fal. I Sir: like who more bold.

Simple. I thanke your worship: I shall make my Master
glad with these tydings.

Hofst. Thou are clearly: thou art clearly (*Sir John*)
was there a wise woman with thee?

Fal. I that there was (mine *Hofst*) one that hath taught
me more wit, then euer I learn'd before in my life: and
I paid nothing for it neither, but was paid for my learn-
ing.

Bar. Out alas (*Sir*) cozonage: meere cozonage.

Hofst. Where be my horses? speake well of them var-
letto.

Bar. Run away with the cozoners: for so soone as
I came beyond *Eaton*, they threw me off, from behinde
one of them, in a lough of myre; and set spurres, and
away; like three *Germane*-diuels; three *Doctor Fan-*
staffes.

Hofst. They are gone but to meete the Duke (*villaine*)
doe not say they be fled: *Germanes* are honest men,

Enans. Where is mine *Hofst*?

Hofst. What is the matter Sir?

Enans. Haue a care of your entertainments: there is a
friend of mine come to Towne, tels mee there is three
Cozen-Iermans, that has cozend all the *Hofsts* of *Reading*,
of *Maidenhead*, of *Colebrooke*, of horses and money: I
tell you for good will (looke you) you are wise, and full
of gibes, and vlouting-stocks: and 'tis not conuenient
you should be cozoned. Fare you well.

Cai. Ver's mine *Hofst de Iartee*?

Hofst. Here (*Master Doctor*) in perplexitie, and doubt-
full delemma.

Cai. I cannot tell vat is dat: but it is tell-a-me, dat
you make grand preparation for a Duke de *Iamanie*: by
my trot: der is no Duke that the Court is know, so
come: I tell you for good will: adieu.

Hofst. Huy and cry, (*villaine*) goe: assist me Knight, I
am vadone: fly, run: huy, and cry (*villaine*) I am vn-
done.

Fal. I would all the world might be cozond, for I
haue beene cozond and beaten too: if it should come
to the eare of the Court, how I haue beene transformed;
and how my transformation hath beene washd, and
cudgeld, they would melt mee out of my fat drop by
drop, and liquor Fishermens-boots with me: I warrant
they would whip me with their fine wits, till I were as
crest-falne as a dride-peare: I neuer prosper'd, since I
forwore my selfe at *Primero*: well, if my winde were
but long enough; I would repent: Now? Whence come
you?

Qui. From the two parties forsooth.

Fal. The Diuell take one partie, and his Dam the
other: and so they shall be both bestow'd; I haue suf-

fer'd more for their sakes;
constancy of mans dispositi-

Qui. And haue not they
ciouly one of them; *Mistris*
blacke and blew, that you d-

her.
Fal. What tell'st thou m-
was beaten my selfe into all
bow: and I was like to be a
of *Brainford*, but that my a-
my counterfeiting the action
me, the knaue *Constable* had
mon Stocks, for a Witch.

Qui. Sir: let me speake v-
you shall heare how things g-
content: here is a Letter w-
hearts) what a-doe here is to
one of you do's not serue her
cross'd.

Fal. Come vp into my Ch-

Scena Sexta.

Enter *Fenton*.

Hofst. Master *Fenton*, talk-
heauy: I will giue ouer all.

Fen. Yet heare me speake
And (as I am a gentleman) ile
A hundred pound in gold, m-

Hofst. I will heare you (*M*)
the least) keepe your counsel.

Fen. From time to time, I
With the deare loue I beare t-

Who, mutually, hath answer'd
(So fare forth, as her selfe mi-

Euen to my wish; I haue a le-
Of such contents, as you will

The mirth whereof, so larded
That neither (singly) can be

Without the shew of both: f-
Hath a great Scene: the ima-

Ile show you here at large (*h*)
To night at *Hernes-Oke*, iust

Must my sweet *Nan* present t-
The purpose why, is here: in

VWhile other Iests are someth-
Her father hath commanded

Away with *Slender*, and with
Immediately to Marry: She h-

Her Mother, (euen strong aga-
And firme for *Doctor Caino*)

That he shall likewise shuffle
While other sports are taskin-

And at the *Deauy*, where a *P*-
Strait marry her: to this her

She seemingly obedient) like
Made promise to the *Doctor*:

Her Father meanes she shall b-
And in that habit, when *Slend*-

To take her by the hand, and
She shall goe with him: her M-

(The better to deuote her to
For they must all be mask'd, a-